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AUTHOR	Brightman, Richard W.
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ABSTRACT

Thirty-three division chairmen from community colleges across the United States participated in an August 1970 conference whose purpose was to serve specific personal and interpersonal, group, and instructional systems objectives and to prepare specific guidelines for leadership in improvement of curricula and instruction in community colleges. The conference, sponsored by the League for Innovation, proved to be a successful pilot project. The topics of the conference were: (1) emerging role of the division chairman as an educational leader; (2) his relations with faculty, administration, and students; (3) innovation for improved instruction; (4) group experience; (5) effect of administrative problems on teachers; and (6) development of insight and skill in divisional management. Evaluation of the conference was made by: (1) tabulation and narration, which appear in the conference syllabus (not included in this report); and (2) a survey conducted after one academic year to see if the participants perceived changes in their own leadership ability as a result of attending the conference. (CA)

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Coast Community College district

1370 ADAMS AVENUE • COSTA MESA • CALIFORNIA 92626

NORMAN E. WATSON - CHANCELLOR

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EVALUATING THE DIVISION CHAIRMEN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE OF 1970

JC 710 153

RICHARD W. BRIGHTMAN
OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
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THE CONFERENCE

In August of 1970, the Coast Community College District, together with the League for Innovation in the Community College, conducted a leadership conference for community college division chairmen sponsored by a grant awarded by the U. S. Office of Education under Part E of the Educational Professions Development Act. The title of the conference was "New Dimensions in Division Chairmen Leadership."

The conference was a pilot program which, if successful, would lead to subsequent leadership conferences in the summers to follow. As a pilot program, the conference was successful. The League for Innovation has been awarded another grant from the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to conduct division chairmen leadership conferences at four different community college locations during the Summer of 1971.

The 1970 conference consisted of individual presentations and lectures, panel presentations and group discussions, as well as a weekend retreat at the California Teachers Association Conference Facility at Monte Corona near Arrowhead, California. It was attended by 33 division chairmen drawn from community colleges across the United States. Each participating college is a member of the League for Innovation in the community college.

The conference served the objectives of preparing specific guidelines relative to leadership in the improvement of curricula and instruction in the community colleges, and did this through the preparation of a syllabus which, according to the project proposal, was to

> have national impact in the sense that it will reflect the results of this institute which will serve as the

> national model for the member institutions of the League for Innovation which represents most of the large junior colleges in the nation, comprising one eighth of the junior college enrollment nationwide. (Proposal, p. 4.)

In addition to serving the objective of preparing a curriculum syllabus, the conference served specific personal objectives. These objectives, as expressed in the project proposal, are listed below:

A. Personal and interpersonal objectives

> Participant will: (1) recognize what he is feeling; (2) express willingness to share his feelings; (3) request feedback of his expressions; (4) find out how others see him; (5) share with others how he sees himself; (6) recognize barriers that exist when trying to communicate, e.g., (a) shifts in meaning, (b) judging, (c) emphasis on words, of feelings; (7) recognize the constraints that he imposes on his expression and on others; (8) recognize the way in which he and others tend to resist engaging in authentic communion; and (9) recognize the difference between congruent and noncongruent communion.

B. Group objectives

> Participant will: (1) recognize a variety of leadership styles; and (a) describe how they feel about each, (b) describe effects which each has on morale and production.

C. Instructional systems objectives

> Participants will be able to: (1) produce a self-instructional package which meets the RELCV systems criteria; (2) set out steps for back-home implementation of faculty development of self-instructional packages via instructional systems procedures; (3) discriminate between "here now" and "there-then" statements and will prefer "here-now" in his own communion; (4) discriminate between personal and impersonal statements and will prefer personal; (5) discriminate between confronting and evading and will prefer to confront; (6) discriminate between feelings and thoughts and will prefer to express his feelings; and (7) discriminate between risk taking and risk avoiding and will be willing to take risks.

Through the use of group dynamics, participants at the conference were to develop these abilities and characteristics under the direction of experts in the field of higher education and administration.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of the conference consists of two phases. The first of these is a tabulation and narration of various evaluative activities exercised by Dr. Richards during the conduct of the conference itself. This appears in the syllabus of the conference and will be discussed presently. The second aspect of evaluation consists of delivering a follow-up survey questionnaire to each of the 33 division chairmen attending the conference. The questionnaire has been designed to ascertain whether or not the participants perceive changes in their own leadership behavior as a result of attending the conference. It also asks each participant to identify those aspects of the conference which were most influential in bringing about those changes in behavior and those that were least influential. The questionnaire appears in Appendix I.

THE SYLLABUS

One major objective of the conference was to produce a syllabus reflecting its results and which would communicate its activities in such a way that the conference could serve as a national model for other similar activities. The syllabus, entitled "Division Chairmen Leadership Conference Syllabus" describes its activities in some detail and includes brief summaries of the various presentations and discussions that took place. In addition, the syllabus recites a number of anecdotes and other indications from the conference participants that serve as an informal evaluation. By and large, these comments and recitations all indicate that the conference was a success.

Part II of the syllabus, entitled "Objectives of the Division Chairmen Leadership Conference," consists of six sub-sections. Each of these describes a particular activity of the conference. None defines an objective or objectives that its activities would serve. The titles of these sub-sections are listed here.

A. The Emerging Role of the Division Chairman as an Educational Leader

B. The Chairman's Relations with Faculty, Administration, and Students

C. The Chairman and Innovation for Improved Instruction

D. The Chairmen and Group Experience

E. The Effect of Administrative Problems on Teachers

F. Development of Insight and Skill in Divisional Management

These all are topics discussed by the participants with various individuals who came to the conference to deliver presentations or to conduct group discussions and experimental activities. The syllabus devotes some 33 pages to summarizing the discussions that took place at the conference. It also outlines the basic ideas and areas in which division chairmen came to agreement as to various aspects of their roles both as they are and as they should be.

In general, the syllabus focuses upon conference discussions of the role of division chairmen as opposed to describing specific objectives of the conference itself. Only one of the six topics discussed in Part II of the syllabus carried a title that implied that the division chairman was to be a leader at his college. The remainder of the topics considered other aspects of the division chairman's role. All in all, judging by the content of the

syllabus, the attention paid at the conference to specific techniques of leadership and characteristics of leaders was minimal.

This is not to say, of course, that the syllabus does not fulfill its purpose to "reflect the results of this institute which will serve as a national model for the member institutions of the League for Innovation..." (Proposal, p. 4.) The syllabus does, in fact, reflect the results of the conference in terms of describing what went on. It does not, however, provide "specific guidelines relative to leadership in the improvement of curriculum and instruction" (Proposal, p. 4.)

Page 45 of the syllabus lists the conclusions arrived at by chairmen attending the conference. None of these conclusions mention leadership skills as an aspect of the division chairman's role. One conclusion concedes that "the chairman's greatest divisional challenge will be in human relations among staff and students." (Syllabus, p. 45.) This concession, however, is not expressed in terms of leadership and would seem to be more oriented toward the type of experimental exercises undertaken at the conference itself. These exercises were more concerned with intergroup and interpersonal relationships than with the development and exercise of leadership skills and ability.

The syllabus also includes the director's evaluation of the conference as based on reactions of the participants. By and large, this reaction was very favorable. Participants cited attitude changes and informal communications as the most valuable contribution of the conference. They also reported that one of the conference's major strengths was discussion of common problems with other chairmen, administrators, and consultants. The evaluation also indicated the participants' opinions as to the conference's major weaknesses. These

weaknesses included its length (it was too long), its time placement at the end of the summer period, and the manner in which time of the conference was allocated to various activities.

In summary, the syllabus does a good job in reviewing the activities of the conference and in presenting an initial evaluation and interpretation of the participants' behavior. It does not provide guidelines dealing with leadership practices and principles that grew out of the conference.

THE SURVEY

Evaluating a leadership conference should presumably evaluate the degree to which leadership as exercised by conference participants in fact changed and, hopefully, improved. One way to do this involves comparing the degree to which each conference participant views his leadership style as having changed and/or improved with the degree to which those he leads feels that the participants leadership behavior has changed and/or improved. This type of evaluation was judged to be inadvisable. This was so because those attending the conference engaged in a sensitivity type of exercise during which they were most candid and outgoing in terms of their relationships with other participants at the conference and with those responsible for administering it. Therefore, the prospect of querying the participants' subordinates in an effort to determine whether or not these subordinates perceived a change in leadership behavior would seem to violate the confidence promised participants by the conference administrators. As a result, only that aspect of evaluation that measured the degree to which the conference participants perceived their own leadership behavior as changing were employed.

Some attention should also be paid to the degree to which the conference achieved the personal objectives listed in the project proposal. These objectives were offered as those personal goals towards which the conference was to strive. Between the time that the proposal was approved for funding and the time at which the conference was to begin, however, the person originally scheduled to serve as the conference director, one Dr. Stuart Johnson, was unable to fulfill that function. He was replaced by Dr. Jerrel Richards of the Orange Coast College Psychology and Counseling staff. Dr. Richards directed the conference modifying its objectives as necessary to conduct it in a manner he thought best. No formal articulation of the objectives actually pursued by the conference has been made available.

The follow-up questionnaire shown in Appendix I was delivered to each of the 33 conference participants in May, 1971. The delay between the end of the conference and the distribution of questionnaires is deliberate. The main interest of this study is the degree to which the conference participants perceived their leadership behavior as modified during the school year following the conference. Of the 33 questionnaires distributed, a total of 17 were returned. As the questionnaire was answered anonymously, there is no way to identify those who did not return it.

Appendix II shows the response frequencies for those questions in the questionnaire that could be answered in an objective manner. Appendix III shows a tabulation of the responses received on questions that asked for a non-structured response. In Appendix III, responses are shown for each of the various open-ended questions appearing in the questionnaire document. Beside each response is an indication of the number of respondents who

answered the questions in the manner indicated by the response itself. Thus, for example, in terms of question two, three respondents indicated that visits with division chairmen from throughout the United States was the one aspect of the conference that did most to change their behavior as leaders. Similarly, one respondent indicated that sensitivity training was the one least important aspect of the conference in this regard.

DISCUSSION OF SURVEY RETURNS

Appendix II shows a tally of the responses received from the 17 conference participators who returned the survey questionnaire. Judging from question number one, approximately two thirds of the respondents indicated that their colleagues' perceptions of them as leaders changed this year as compared to prior years before the conference.

Question four indicates that participants believe that their perception of students increased moderately and that their perceptions of faculty members in their division and of administrators in their college improved greatly or moderately.

Personal leadership styles changed moderately for most respondents although a few indicate that it changed greatly. Only one respondent indicated that his personal style of leadership was no different than it was before the conference.

As to question eight, four respondents indicated that their communications had not improved with students, three that they had not improved with other faculty members in the division, and three that there had been no improvement in communications with administrators. By and large, however, respondents

indicated that communications improved either moderately or greatly between themselves and these three groups.

Question eleven sought to determine the nature of conference participants' dealings with others at their college. Ten respondents indicated that these dealings were more on a personal than an impersonal level, although seven indicated that there was no change in their behavior as a result of the conference. Thirteen respondents indicated that their dealings were more open or confronting in nature and four indicated no change. Eight responded that their personal dealings were based more on thoughts, two based on feelings, and five indicated no particular change as a result of the conference. Finally, ten respondents considered their dealings with colleagues more oriented towards "here-now" considerations. One considered them to be more oriented towards "there-then", and six of them indicated no particular difference as a result of the conference in terms of this aspect of their dealings with faculty administrators and students.

By and large, conference participants show a greater propensity to take risks after the conference than before, as their answers to question twelve show. Two respondents indicated that they could see no change in their behavior with respect to risk-taking.

The final question, question thirteen, sought to determine the degree to which participants devised and implemented self-instructional packages at their college in the past year. Twelve of the 17 respondents indicated that they had.

Appendix III shows a listing of answers provided by the respondent group to questions two, three, five, six, nine, and ten. Question two sought to

learn from the respondents what one aspect of the conference did the most to change their behavior as a leader. Three respondents indicated that visits with division chairmen from throughout the United States did the most and the remaining answers were fairly widespread over the gamut of conference activities.

Question three, seeking respondents opinions as to the least influential conference activity in terms of changing behavior, yielded fewer answers than did question two. Two respondents indicated that sensitivity training was the least influential in this regard, although a weekend retreat and the experimental interactions at Monte Corona, are both oriented toward the sensitivity training experience.

Question five sought to learn what one aspect of the conference did the most to improve the participants perceptions of others. Three respondents indicated that exchange of ideas with others did this. Two said experimental groups was most influential and two others indicated that informal sessions before or after and in between scheduled meetings was the most important in this regard.

Question six elicited responses as to what aspect of the conference was least productive in terms of improving participants perception of others. Two respondents indicated that the "hurried sensitivity sessions" were the least productive in this regard.

Question nine asked respondents to indicate the one aspect of the conference that did the most to improve communications with colleagues at their colleges. Two division chairmen indicated that specific presentations by individual consultants brought to the conference did this. Two respondents indicated that they learned and grew confident that college administration is

based on reason, impartiality, and fairness, and that this did the most to improve their communications with others. Two other participants said that contact with division chairmen from throughout the United States was the most influential feature of the conference in terms of improving communications.

Question ten sought to learn what one aspect of the conference did the least to improve communications. Two of the three respondents answering this question indicated speeches and formal presentations in general did the least. The other respondent indicated that association with other California junior college people did the least to improve communications, but this, judging from the respondent's other remarks, was due to his position as a California junior college person himself.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE SURVEY

No attempt will be made to present formalized conclusions based upon this relatively informal survey which did not enjoy a high rate of response. Those who did respond did not answer all of the questions leaving, for the most part, the open-ended questions blank. As a result, not a great deal was learned about the effectiveness of the division chairmen conference.

The open-ended responses, however, tended to point up a facet of this conference that many anticipated even before the conference was held, that is, that division chairmen will gain the most benefit from this type of exercise through their exposure to other division chairmen from throughout the country. This one aspect of the leadership conference, then, proved to be the most valuable in the eyes of those who responded to the follow-up questionnaire.

Again, judging from the responses to the objective questions in the follow-up questionnaire, one could conclude that the conference was relatively successful in terms of improving the participants ability to perceive others.

as well as in terms of changing their leadership behavior so that others perceived them as a leader more accurately than they did before. This, together with data from question eleven, suggests that the conference participants, when returning to their colleges, were in general more transparent in their leadership roles than they were before and those being led were better able to understand the nature and purpose of the leadership being exercised.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Leadership conferences to be held in the future should be described in terms of rather more specific objectives to be served than were available for the one held at Orange Coast College in August of 1970. Furthermore, it is recommended that all participants be cognizant of the objectives to be sought during the conduct of the conference and that they should be prepared to evaluate the conference in terms of its success in meeting them.

Although he has not researched the matter thoroughly, this writer is somewhat familiar with work that has been done in industry in terms of evaluating leadership roles and in developing industrial programs to improve leadership skills for managers, plant foremen, and other industrial supervisors. Such investigations as conducted by Rensis Likert[1], Douglas McGregor[2], and Tannenbaum and Schmidt[3] offer worthwhile guidance in this area.

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[1] Likert, Rensis, New Patterns in Management, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961).

[2] McGregor, Douglas M., The Human Side of Enterprise, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960).

[3] Tannenbaum, Robert and Schmidt, Warren H., "How to Choose a Leadership Pattern," Harvard Business Review, March-April, 1958, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 95-101.

Recognizing that leadership as exercised by community college division chairmen is likely different from that exercised by shop foremen and business managers, certain leadership principles identified by scholars in the field nevertheless deserve attention in a conference devoted to division chairmen leadership.

Conversations with participants at the close of the conference as well as responses to the follow-up survey reported here lead this writer to conclude that most participants felt that the conference was a worthwhile experience. The interaction with other division chairmen as well as with higher level community college administrators and university scholars was doubtless a most valuable and rewarding experience. Whether or not the experience has done much to change leadership behavior cannot be rigorously determined, of course. If the experience itself is worthwhile and apparently it was, perhaps it would be best to change the description and name of the conference, eliminating references to leadership development, concepts and practices; replacing them with sensitivity training, group interaction, and other experiential activities. These latter seem to emerge as the most beneficial aspects of the program.

APPENDIX I

DIVISION CHAIRMAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

August, 1970

FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

This survey will help us plan future leadership conferences more effectively. Please answer the following questions and return the questionnaire using the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided. For the sake of anonymity please do not put your name on this questionnaire. Many thanks.

1. Do you think your colleagues' perceptions of you as a leader have changed this year over past years?

   ☐ Yes, they see me more accurately than before.

   ☐ Yes, they see me less accurately than before.

   ☐ No, their perceptions of me are the same.

2. What one aspect of the conference has done the most to change your behavior as a leader?

3. What one aspect of the conference has done the least to change your behavior as a leader?

4. To what extent has your perception of others improved this year over last for:

	Greatly	Moderately	None
A. Students	☐	☐	☐
B. Faculty members in your division	☐	☐	☐
C. Administrators	☐	☐	☐

5. What <u>one</u> aspect of the conference has done the <u>most</u> to improve your perception of others?

6. What <u>one</u> aspect of the conference has done the <u>least</u> to improve your perception of others?

7. To what extent is your personal style of leadership:

	Greatly	Moderately	None
A. Different from other division chairmen at your college?	☐	☐	☐
B. More effective as a result of the conference?	☐	☐	☐
C. Different than it was before the conference?	☐	☐	☐

8. Because of attending the conference to what extent have communications improved between you and:

	Greatly	Moderately	None
A. Students	☐	☐	☐
B. Faculty members in your division	☐	☐	☐
C. Administrators	☐	☐	☐

9. What <u>one</u> aspect of the conference has done the <u>most</u> to improve your communications?

10. What <u>one</u> aspect of the conference has done the <u>least</u> to improve your communications?

11. Consider your dealings with faculty, administrators and students at your college. As a result of the conference, are these dealings

A. ☐ More personal; ☐ More impersonal; ☐ About the same

B. ☐ More open or confronting; ☐ More cautious or evading; ☐ About the same

C. ☐ Based more on thoughts; ☐ Based more on feelings; ☐ About the same

D. ☐ More oriented toward "here-now;" ☐ More oriented toward "there-then;" ☐ About the same

12. In the past year, have you taken more risks as a leader than was your custom before the conference:

☐ Yes, many more

☐ Yes, a few more

☐ No, I have taken no more nor no fewer risks

☐ No, I have avoided risks

13. Have you devised steps to implement self-instructional packages at your college in the past year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

14. Please make additional comments.

Appendix II

1. *Do you think your colleagues' perceptions of you as a leader have changed this year over past years?*

(10) ☐ Yes, they see me more accurately than before

(0) ☐ Yes, they see me less accurately than before

(5) ☐ No, their perceptions of me are the same

(2) ☐ No answer

4. *To what extent has your perception of others improved this year over last for:*

	Greatly	Moderately	None	No Answer
A. Students	*(1)* ☐	*(10)* ☐	*(4)* ☐	*(2)* ☐
B. Faculty members in your division	*(7)* ☐	*(10)* ☐	*(0)* ☐	*(0)* ☐
C. Administrators	*(7)* ☐	*(9)* ☐	*(0)* ☐	*(1)* ☐

7. *To what extent is your personal style of leadership:*

	Greatly	Moderately	None	No Answer
A. Different from other division chairmen at your college?	*(5)* ☐	*(12)* ☐	*(0)* ☐	*(0)* ☐
B. More effective as a result of the conference?	*(2)* ☐	*(15)* ☐	*(0)* ☐	*(0)* ☐
C. Different than it was before the conference?	*(2)* ☐	*(12)* ☐	*(1)* ☐	*(2)* ☐

8. *Because of attending the conference to what extent have communications improved between you and:*

	Greatly	Moderately	None	No Answer
A. Students	(2) ☐	(10) ☐	(4) ☐	(1) ☐
B. Faculty members in your division	(6) ☐	(8) ☐	(3) ☐	(0) ☐
C. Administrators	(8) ☐	(6) ☐	(3) ☐	(0) ☐

11. *Consider your dealings with faculty, administrators and students at your college. As a result of the conference, and these dealings:*

A.
- (10) ☐ More personal
- (0) ☐ More impersonal
- (7) ☐ About the same
- (0) ☐ No answer

B.
- (13) ☐ More open or confronting
- (0) ☐ More cautious or evading
- (4) ☐ About the same
- (0) ☐ No answer

C.
- (8) ☐ Based more on thoughts
- (2) ☐ Based more on feelings
- (5) ☐ About the same
- (2) ☐ No answer

D. (10) ☐ More oriented toward "here-now"

(1) ☐ More oriented toward "there-then"

(6) ☐ About the same

(0) ☐ No answer

12. *In the past year, have you taken more risks as a leader than was your custom before the conference?*

(6) ☐ Yes, many more

(9) ☐ Yes, a few more

(2) ☐ No, I have taken no more nor no fewer risks

(0) ☐ No, I have avoided risks

(0) ☐ No answer

13. *Have you devised steps to implement self-instructional packages at your college in the past year?*

(12) ☐ Yes

(5) ☐ No

(0) ☐ No answer

APPENDIX III

Open-End Responses

2. *What <u>one</u> aspect of the conference has done the <u>most</u> to change your behavior as a teacher?*

(1) - Discussions

(1) - Exchanges of view

(3) - Visit with division chairmen from throughout the United States

(1) - Emphasis on learning as opposed to teaching

(1) - Development of philosophy with values to reflect the same

(1) - Interaction with administrators

(1) - Retreat at Monte Corona

(1) - The prospect of encouraging new experimentation in education

(1) - An insight into the extensive role of the division chairman

(1) - Frame of reference with other chairmen

(1) - Learning from other chairmen

(1) - Sensitivity training

(3) - No answer

3. *What <u>one</u> aspect of the conference has done the <u>least</u> to change your behavior as a teacher?*

(1) - Week-end retreat

(2) - Sensitivity training

(1) - Experiential interactions at Monte Corona

(1) - Talks by people whose ideas did not stimulate me

(1) - Coffee breaks, sailboating

(1) - How I operate as a Division Chairman

(10) - no answer

5. *What <u>one</u> aspect of the conference has done the <u>most</u> to improve your perception of others?*

(1) - Discussions

(2) - Informal sessions before, after and between scheduled meetings

(2) - Experiential groups

(3) - Exchange of ideas with others

(1) - The additional general knowledge that people are about the same everywhere

(1) - Discussions with group psychologist

(1) - The team approach

(1) - The group session

(1) - In finding myself, I have found others

(4) - no answer

6. *What <u>one</u> aspect of the conference has done the <u>least</u> to improve your perception of others?*

(1) - Panel discussions

(1) - Large formal seminar

(1) - Preparation and reading of the syllabi

(1) - Listening to formal talks

(2) - The hurried sensitivity sessions

(11) - no answer

9. *What <u>one</u> aspect of the conference has done the <u>most</u> to improve your communications?*

(1) - Knowledge of operations in other parts of the country

(2) - Discussions

(2) - Specific presentations

(1) - Opportunity to compare self with other division chairmen

(2) - Building of confidence that administration is based on reason, impartiality and fairness

(1) - Encouragement of more personal contact with faculty

(2) - Contact with division chairmen from throughout the United States

(1) - Better "listening" training

(1) - Informal discussions

(1) - The group session

(1) - Frankness about my role as a division chairman

(2) - no answer

10. *What <u>one</u> aspect of the conference has done the <u>least</u> to improve your communications?*

(2) - **Speeches, presentations in general**

(1) - **Association with other California junior college people**

(14) - **no answer**